

Investigating Picturebook Apps
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Digital Picturebook Characteristics

Picturebook content in digital form

Downloaded from publisher website or iTunes / Google Play

Viewed on Screen – e-readers (Kindle), tablet (iPad), computer, or smartphone

May be a *digitized rendering* of a print-based picturebook or original to digital

Picturebook software application or *app*

Varying Levels of Interactivity: Types of Digital Picturebooks

Basic E-Picturebooks

Electronic Graphic Novels

Print – Digital Hybrid Texts

Cyber Texts

Transmedial Narratives

Augmented Reality

Book-Game Hybrids

Features of Picturebook Apps

Tableaux Features

features within a single screen shot

Transitional Features

features for navigating among screens

Enhanced Features

interactive features that add to story elements

Tableaux Features

Peritextual Features

Voice Over / Sounds Choices

Text and Image

Hidden Narrative Elements

Transitional features

Navigational Pages

Navigational Icons

Navigational Assistance

Book-Like Transitions

Enhanced features

Picturebooks With Hyperlinks

Video Enhancements

Gaming Modules

Gaming Elements

Video Production

Augmented Reality Defined

Combines real world and virtual environments

Interactive in real time

Blends digital technologies and analogue text / images

Requires a visual “trigger”

Now works with hand-held devices

Initially Envisioned as “Digital Pop-Up” Books

Features of Augmented Reality Picturebooks

Vision-based Tracking Technology

On-the-fly Reconstruction (localization)

Embodied Interactions

Enhancement of Narrative & Informational Content

An Emerging Typology of Augmented Reality Picturebooks

- **Narrative Augmentation** – take elements from picturebook and add animation to characters, objects, or the setting. **(Morris Lessmore)**
- **Visual Augmentation** – adding visual (3D) elements, virtual objects, or characters graphics that are not included in picturebook storyworld. **(Horrible Hauntings)**
- **Informational Augmentation** – information is provided that was not part of the original story or informational picturebook, video clips, text, and images. **(Bugs 3D, iSolar System)**
- **Environmental Augmentation** – adding graphic elements from the book to the environment. **(iDinosaur)**
- **Game-Based Augmentation** – adds gaming modules to the narrative aspects of the picturebook. **(The Numberlys)**

Criteria for Selecting Book Apps

What features have been removed or included?

Is the app easy to navigate?

Are the illustrations of high quality?

Are sound effects / music appropriate?

Are the features distracting for young readers?

Is the app more of a game or a book?

Are reference materials easily accessed?

What have reviewers said about the app?

Online Reviews of Book Apps

Commonsensemedia.com

Appadvice.com

Kidsbookapp.com

iTunes store / Google Play

Amazon.com

Kirkusreviews.com

Digital-storytime.com

Hbook.com (the Horn Book)

Possibilities

More portable

Less expensive than hardcover picturebooks

Can be initially engaging

Ready access to epitextual materials (website, dictionaries)

Supports reading through “read-to-me” features

Multimodal features (sound effect, music, video clips)

Allows other options for readers

Instant recommendations

Challenges

Extra materials may be distracting for readers

Is it a game or a narrative?

What is lost in the translation from print-based to digital platforms?

Loss of physical features of codex

What is meant by “interactive” may vary greatly

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Favorite Picturebook Apps.... So Far

The Fantastic Flying Books of Morris Lessmore – William Joyce
 The Numberlys– William Joyce
 Billy's Booger – William Joyce
 Bullseye / Gizmo – Moonbot Studios
 Spot - Weisner
 Marcel the Shell – Jennie Slate
 Various Dr. Seuss Books – Oceanhouse Media
 Animalia – Graeme Base
 Mr. Sandman (Fear of the Dark)- hocusbookus
 Dandelion – Protein Innovative Apps
 Midnight Feast – Slap Happy Larry
 Horrible Hauntings – Goose Bottom Books
 Book Of Holes – Chocolate Factory Publishing
 Dinosaurs - Kiwi Storybooks
 Sherlock Holmes Interactive Adventures – Haab
 Rita the Lizard – Rita Blasco Grau
 The Monster at the End of the Book – Sesame Street
 Don't Let the Pigeon Run This App! – Mo Willems
 The Heart and the Bottle – Oliver Jeffers
 The Moon – Windy Press
 The Land of Me – Vimeo
 Dragon Brush – Spike Press
 Rules of Summer – Shaun Tan
 Wrong Book – Wheelbarrow Press
 Bobo Explores Light – Game Collage
 Oliver Dreams – Ian Falconer
 Monsters Get Sick – BusyBee Studios